1:McIlwraith E-5 (1922-1924) 1948
NE6 Bellacoola NE6

133 tains. From each pocket between these mountains an ice-
cold affluent comes swirling down to the main river. The
137 predominant tree in the river valleys is the cedar[1] which in
many cases attains great girth and height. Cottonwoods
flourish in places, and everywhere there is an almost impene-
trable undergrowth of devil's club, berry bushes, and other
shrubbery of almost tropical density. On the lower slopes of
the mountains, moss-festooned pines and spruces are the most
common trees, gradually becoming smaller and fewer until the
133 barren peaks are reached. The mountains rise so precipitously
that their snowcaps and glaciers seem to overhang the valley,
a narrow ribbon of green winding far below. The range of
vision from the bank of the river is limited by the all-encircling
mountains. Here and there a distant vista opens up to expose
peak after peak, but on the whole there is a feeling of confine-
ment, in contrast with the open wastes of the upper country
where the Bella Coola rises. Mountains, forests, flowing water,
these are the three dominant impressions of the country (see
Plate 6).

136 The mammals of central British Columbia, although com-
paratively common, have never been of primary importance.
[291] The marten, the wolverine, the lynx, and bears, both black
and grizzly, were formerly hunted for their skins to serve as
[262] cloaks. Deer were killed whenever possible, but formed a
negligible item of diet. The beaver also was prized for its
[439] flesh. The skins of moose and caribou were traded from the
Carrier Indians, but neither of these animals was found in the
[286] Bella Coola area. The mammal of greatest economic impor-
[237] tance was the mountain goat, the wool of which was woven into
blankets. Smoked goat meat was formerly found in every
[251] house and was almost the only flesh available during the
[262] winter. Small game was abundant, but seals were a luxury.
Neither were birds of great importance to the Bella Coola.
[223] Members of the tribe resident near the sea-coast used to kill

[1]Appendix C contains a glossary of the scientific names of the flora and fauna mentioned in this monograph.

1:McIlwraith E-5 (1922-1924)1948
NE6 Bellacoola NE6

quantities of ducks and geese, and the inhabitants of the inland villages sometimes made hunting expeditions to the nesting places of wild-fowl in the lakes of the interior uplands. Although numbers of birds were sometimes killed in this way, they were never a steady article of diet. The same is true of grouse. Always plentiful, these birds were commonly killed, but never in large numbers.

The basis of the food supply was fish. The river teemed with salmon, which enabled the country to support its relatively large population. Spring, sockeye, hump-back, dog, and cohoe salmon, all entered the river in thousands during the spring and summer, while the steel-head could be caught throughout the year. They were taken in weirs and their flesh smoked for winter use. Throughout the year, salmon was the principal article of diet. Second in importance was the olachen, a fish somewhat resembling a herring, which entered the river in great numbers during April or May. They were taken in purse-like nets,[6] allowed to rot for ten days or two weeks, and then boiled. The grease was skimmed off and kept indefinitely to be used as a relish for other foods. It was always a sign of poverty if a person were obliged to eat berries without olachen grease. Trout and bull-heads were found in the river, but were not sufficiently plentiful to be of importance.

Although no form of agriculture was practised, the Bella Coola used vegetable food to a considerable extent. Berries were abundant; some were eaten raw, but many more were pounded into a pulpy mass and dried in the sun. Cakes prepared in this way kept indefinitely and formed one of the regular winter foods. The bark of the hemlock and cottonwood was eaten, as well as the roots of many plants. In recent years many of these have not been used, so that an investigator is apt to overlook their great importance in early times. Although useless for food, the cedar was the corner-stone of Bella Coola material culture. From its trunk were split out, with wedges, the wide planks which formed

[6] See Appendix A for a description of olachen fishing.

1: McIlwraith E-5 (1922-1924)1948
NE6 Bellacoola NE6

After bestowal of these presents, the *siki* of the penultimate group of guests shakes his rattle, and exactly the same procedure is carried out by members of his party. They, too, give presents to X and the other Bella Coola chiefs. The same rites are carried out by each party of guests in the reverse order of their arrival. It is frequently near dawn before the first-comers have completed their dances and distribution of gifts. X then gives another meal to all, with no restriction on the choice of food. This concludes the night's ceremony, and the guests depart, except those who are staying in X's house.

556 *

THE POTLATCH: FIRST DAY

Considering the lengthy ceremonials of the preceding evening, it is not surprising that on this day no one stirs early. The guests receive their breakfast in the houses where they are accommodated, and meanwhile a number of young men gather in X's house to assist in the preparation of food for the main meal of the day. During the previous night a large amount of smoked mountain goat has been put in water to soak. This is now placed in a number of food-boxes, ready for distribution, water is added and hot stones lifted in to bring it to a boil. When the water comes to the boil, mountain goat grease is added, and then bearberries; it is usually about two o'clock in the afternoon before the meal is ready. The guests are summoned and the food given them, the chiefs, as usual, receiving more than those of lower rank. After eating they disperse to await the evening rites.

[251] ● [252] [554]

It was impossible to obtain an accurate account of the ritual carried out on the evening of this, the first day of the potlatch proper. The ceremonial was of less importance than those preceding and following, and it has long fallen into disuse. The guests take up their accustomed places, and the Bella Coola members of the *sisaok* range themselves near them and behind the fire. The corners next the door are occupied by non-members of the society. The singers beat out two of

[182] 556 * 575 [535]

1:McIlwraith E-5 (1922-1924) 1948
NE6 Bellacoola NE6

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* 787
[251]

About half a mile from the glacier there is a large rock shelter where mountain goat hunters are wont to smoke their meat. They are always careful to take with them dyed and undyed cedar-bark and eagle down, knowing that they may encounter the supernatural. Sometimes they hear the voice of *ɑxɣekam*, a deep, long drawn-out hum, *m*·····. If this sound is repeated four times it is a happy augury, but if heard only once it presages ill fortune. In either case some member of the party, one who is ceremonially clean and is brave, blackens his face, puts on a collar of dyed cedar-bark, covered with eagle down, steps outside, and says in effect:

"Hail! Petrified One. In the beginning you came down from *Ałquntäm*, from all that was wonderful and powerful. You have not changed, hence we mortals can still hear your voice. Please, may it be well with us. There is none other like you."

If the supplicant is ceremonially clean the mountain will answer *hi*·····, four times, and there will be heard what sounds like a great landslide. Then the petitioner takes some small portions of meat, some dyed and some undyed cedar-bark, and eagle down and throws them on the fire.

"Please accept, Oh *Kusiaot*" (Powerful One), he says.

Thus propitiated, *ɑxɣekam* grants them success in hunting.

778 (13) *Spipixłnăn·i*: On the south side of the Dean River about one mile from its mouth. Here, in the beginning of time, Raven cast his war-knife, *spła*, which was turned to stone and can still be seen. Its power has likewise become localized at this point.

(14) In the beginning of time Mount *Swakɣ*, near the Dean River, was a man who was turned to stone. Across the river is his wife, *Ałsalnexkł*, whose ancestral name is *Kamiłkăn*, likewise petrified.

[755]
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In most of these places[1] a sick person can receive assistance, if he is willing to risk the consequent dangers. The first essential is that he be in a "clean" condition by the observance of

[1] [i.e. - certain spots where power is localized - see cat. 116, pp 594-600 for their location - ANALYST]

1:McIlwraith E-5 (1922-1924) 1948
NE6 Bellacoola NE6

palm of one hand. The conspirators had been hoping for such an indication, since it gave the information to the brother who was peering through a crack. The younger sister persuaded the older one to hold up her palms to the fire to warm them, thus giving the brother an opportunity to shoot through a knot-hole in the wall of the house. His arrow transfixed his sister's hand and she fell, helpless, whereupon he entered and slew her.

The surviving brother and sister abandoned their home and travelled for a very long time without seeing anyone. Finally, they settled on a mountain top and married. Since that time Carriers have married their sisters.[99]

THE MARRIAGE OF *Tlitcäpliłän·a*'S DAUGHTER

Long ago, when the world was still sparsely populated, there were two poor orphans, a brother and sister, quite alone, without relatives. The boy, who was about eighteen years old, took great care of the girl. In summer, when the people scattered over the country in search of food, the two went together to catch and dry salmon for the winter. The brother had great success. He caught many fish which he suspended on a frame to dry, in charge of his sister, while he went away for four or five days. On his return all the drying salmon had disappeared.

"That is unkind of my sister," he said to himself, "to have eaten all those fish so greedily."

He went to bed without saying anything, but next morning asked her:

"Is it you who have eaten all our food?"

The girl replied in a frightened whisper:

"Don't speak to me about it. I am terrified. A supernatural woman stole it. I think it was *Tlitcäpliłän·a*. I heard something approaching and hid myself. A huge woman came to the drying rack, her snout-like mouth ranged among the fish and sucked them down like lightning, while her teeth rattled as if they were loose in her jaws. She went away as soon as she had finished our salmon."

Next morning the boy bade his sister hide, as he was going to attack the robber of his food. He prepared a bow with a strong arrow and took up his position in ambush overlooking the rack on which hung the salmon he had recently caught. Soon he heard a voice and presently *Tlitcäpliłän·a* appeared, wearing a shaman's collar of dyed and undyed cedar-bark in alternate bands, plentifully sprinkled with eagle down. Her teeth rattled loosely in their sockets. When near the rack, her mouth formed itself into a snout with which she began to suck in the salmon with a horrible

[99] This statement is undoubtedly a mere expression of Bella Coola contempt for their neighbours.

1: McIlwraith E-5 (1922-1924) 1948
NE6 Bellacoola NE6

* 539 * 756 * 787 Previous to her cure, *T̈litcäplilän·a* had promised that whoever made her well should marry one of her four beautiful daughters. She now bade them stand up and told the boy to choose whichever he liked. The four were identical in appearance, and the youth was in a quandary, but a young supernatural being standing near advised him to select the third in age, saying she was by far the most capable. All had wonderful powers but she excelled her sisters, since, if she closed her eyes and wished to be in a certain place, she straightway arrived there. So the lad led this girl out from among her sisters and in a flash all the supernatural ones vanished, except *T̈litcäplilän·a* and her four children. The mother said to her new son-in-law:

"I suppose you will spend the night with us but will want to go back to your own home tomorrow morning."

"Yes," answered the boy. "I am afraid to be too long absent on account of my sister down below."

"Don't worry on her account," said his mother-in-law. "If she should be dead I will restore her, or rather your wife, my daughter, will do so. She has the necessary power."

That night the young man spent in the home of *T̈litcäplilän·a*. Next morning he and his bride set out for the earth, travelling on the same easy, short route by which he had reached *Nusmät·a*. He thought he had been absent for one night only, but one night among supernatural ones being equivalent to a year among mortals, his sister had died of starvation. His wife rubbed her hands over the dead girl's face and she was at once restored to life, greatly to the delight of the bridegroom and all his human friends.

T̈litcäplilän·a's daughter had brought with her from *Nusmät·a* a dog which she instructed to watch her husband and report if he so much as flirted with any other girl. She warned him that if he did so, or if he ever ceased to pay the proper respect to herself, she would leave him and return to her home above. For three years the husband obeyed her instructions, but one night he met a pretty girl and was faithless to his wife. The ever-watchful dog reported this to his mistress, who went back above and never returned to her husband.

THE MARRIAGE OF *T̈litcäplilän·a's* DAUGHTER
(*Second Version*)

● [251] Long ago three brothers went off into the mountains to hunt goats. They had tolerable success and hung up their quarry to dry, leaving *Saxinəo*, the youngest brother, in charge. While the others were absent, *T̈litcäplilän·a* visited the camp and carried off the drying meat, the

1:McIlwraith E-5 (1922-1924)1948
NE6 Bellacoola NE6

women listening from the village are able to tell how many have been caught from the number of times the cry *xak'loi* is raised. 226 796

Then the salmon are cut up (only shell knives may be used for the purpose) and cooked. Everything must be used, heads, bones, and entrails, the only refuse being the blood which is scraped from the leaves and carried into the woods. The leaves themselves, and the strings of dyed and undyed cedar-bark are thrown into the river in accordance with a desire expressed by *Noäkɣnum* long ago. When everything is ready for a meal, the men take their places in two rows, facing each other across a coarse bark mat. Bark spoons have been provided, and when the heralds call for food, the fisherman brings the heads of the salmon and the guests make the motions of eating, though in reality these parts are dried and kept for winter. Boxes containing a liberal portion of the choice meat are next served and all eat freely. Each guest puts on one side what he has not consumed as if to carry it away, as is the custom at an ordinary feast, though his share is really left in the shelter until the following day. Finally, a third course is provided, the back of the fish cooked with the bone in position. Like the last, the guests eat as much as they desire and pack up the residue as if to take away. Then they leave the Spring Salmon House. [412] 226 796 574 [251]

All the fish are not cooked on the one occasion. The following day the fisherman again calls back the men of his village. The same type of meal is served, but this time the guests carry away what they do not eat for the benefit of their families. This portion may be eaten by the women without affronting the salmon. [562]

This rite has not been performed in full detail in Bella Coola for many years, and it was impossible to collect information on some points. It is uncertain, for example, whether this ceremony was carried out by every fisherman or whether there used to be certain individuals with the prerogative of dealing with the first catch. The latter appears to be the most logical 226 796 424

1:McIlwraith E-5 (1922-1924) 1948
NE6 Bellacoola NE6

manner, and was definitely stated to be the case by one well-informed old man. It is clear, however, that every spring salmon was landed with the cry of *xak'loi·*, taken to the Spring Salmon House, and cut up by the men until the time when women were allowed near the river. Another old man stated that the feast took place at night and that only the heads and refuse of the first catch were eaten, the remainder being dried for the winter. Women of child-bearing age were not allowed on the river bank, and were rigorously excluded from the Spring Salmon House until the time when the sun's shadow reached a diagonal scar on the slope of one of the mountains on the north side of North Bentinck Arm. This occurs about August. From that time onwards, there was no calling of *xak'loi·*, and women, except those who were taboo, could cut salmon freely on the bank. It was even stated that refuse of salmon could be thrown into the river after that time. No one knows the origin of this seasonal prohibition, or why it should end when the sun reaches a certain point, but it was faithfully observed in former times.

In Kimsquit similar rites were carried out, the chief variation being that the bodies of four swans were placed in the Spring Salmon House and the fish laid with these at intervals in the line. Moreover, the youth used to bite the back of each salmon as he presented it with the cedar-bark streamer. The same regulations with regard to drinking water, and crying after eating, were enforced for spring salmon as for olachen.

Miscellaneous Beliefs

The following miscellaneous beliefs and customs cannot be assigned to any special aspect of Bella Coola life:

If a spark from a fire jumps out and lights on a person's hand, it is said:

"The fire wants to give you [the person on whom the brand has fallen] food."

If a man sneezes repeatedly, it is said:

2:McIlwraith E-5 (1922-1924) 1948
NE6 Bellacoola NE6

the packers were to meet them. They were not due to arrive for several hours, so *Sānuxmāxots* cooked the goat and had a plentiful meal ready for his followers. They asked whether he had had any luck, and he answered casually that his son had killed one, but when they expressed regret at his lack of fortune, *Sānuxmāxots* pointed to the pile of dead goats, visible in the distance, and said:

"See what my son killed."

Never before had there been such a slaughter of goats at one time, and it was obvious that no time could be lost if the meat was to be smoked before winter. Fortunately, there was a large cave in the vicinity where they established their headquarters. The packers were divided into two parties; some brought in the carcasses, while others kept a fire smouldering, tended the drying meat, and boiled out the grease. It was a slow process and there was a heavy snowfall before it was finished. The snow drifted into the narrow valley to such a depth that it was impossible to think of leaving. The beleaguered hunters were well provided with food; melted snow gave them water, and the cave was sufficient shelter, so their confinement was more irksome than dangerous. Nor did it prove profitless. The smell of food attracted two martens which were so unafraid that they were killed with sticks. All the hunters began to make traps which soon provided them with enough skins to make several of the much-prized blankets.

So the winter dragged away. The wife of one of the packers had a reputation for faithlessness and her husband's companions used to tease him by saying that his wife would have remarried before he got home. This wore on his nerves until he determined to try to reach the village in spite of the snow. He constructed a pair of snow-shoes and set out, carrying with him enough marten-skins for four blankets, packed in a sack made from the stomach of one of the goats. The journey was less difficult than he had feared; he camped for one night, and reached his own village soon after dusk of the next day. Looking through the doorway, he saw his father throwing food into the fire and realized that someone must have died. He called out anxiously, but his parent, who had long since abandoned hope for his son's safety, could not believe that his voice was real, and was not convinced until he actually stood before him. The long-absent one asked for whom the food was being thrown on the fire, and his father replied:

"For you. We thought you must be dead and have burnt almost all your personal possessions."

"That does not matter," replied the son. "We have plenty of meat, grease, and furs."

2: McIlwraith E-5 (1922-1924) 1948
NE6 Bellacoola NE6

226 about a foot of the surface. In the same slow manner a second stake is driven in, about ten feet from the first, and in such a position that the main force of the current would strike at right angles a line drawn between the two. Then two more stakes are placed in position, slightly below the first pair, and nearer together, as shown in the diagram (Figure 3). The posts are often driven before the main run of the fish, and the fixing of the net delayed until that time. It is fastened to the four stakes, with its open end, which faces upstream, forming a rough oval, ten feet wide, of which the lower side rests on the bottom and the upper is at the surface. The outer stakes hold the upper edge, the inner ones secure the lower brim. The olachen are slow-swimming fish which work their way upstream with the rising tide, and, when it turns, drift back into the net. Once within the opening, they lack strength to drive forward against current and tide, and are forced into the closed bottom, floating downstream, in thousands. At the peak of the season, a net is often extended to its full dimensions with a solid mass of fish, throwing a tremendous strain on supports and mesh-work alike. During the day, the mouth is closed with a cross-piece, *nuxtnutsta*, to prevent floating objects from drifting within and damaging it, and opened during the night at whatever hour the tide turns.

FIG. 3. Diagram showing position of the stakes supporting an olachen net.

Early in the morning begins the landing of the fish. The partners paddle out to the bottom of their net and, with considerable exertion, lift it into the canoe. A cord is tied around the bellied mass, cutting off a section, and the end is opened so that the fish from it fall into the bottom of the craft. Another part is dealt with in the same manner, then a third, and so in succession until the gleaming olachen are piled so deeply that no more can be loaded with safety. Sometimes two or three loads, each of many thousands, are taken from a single net. The partners slowly pole to shore where, at the present time, their wives and children wait to unload the canoe. The fish are packed into baskets, carried on the back with the aid of a tump-line, and taken to pits which have been prepared ten to fifteen feet from the bank. These are three or four feet deep, lined with planks, and with their bottoms covered with evergreen boughs. The olachen are emptied into these holes, which are covered with more planks when full. If more fish are landed than can be handled conveniently in this manner, they are laid on branches spread on the ground, and a low wall of planks built up around them. Although the main run lasts for only three or four days, the olachen are so numerous that each group of partners is able to fill several of these storage pits.

[482] 226 251

252 Though most of the catch is thus disposed of, there is always enough

2:McIlwraith E-5 (1922-1924) 1948
NE6 Bellacoola NE6

for treatment in other ways. Some are fried immediately, but the Bella Coola think they lack flavour, although most white men regard them as delicious. Many hundreds are dried for winter use in one of the following methods:

(A) Cedar-sticks, each about three feet in length, are split from the solid stem and smoothed down to a diameter of about one-half inch. One of these is passed through the gills and mouth of one fish after another until the rod is filled with a row of olachen, their tails hanging downwards. Dozens of these sticks are suspended horizontally over the central fire in a house, or, in brilliant sunshine, hung in the open. When dried to a certain extent, they are stored in the upper parts of the houses where the process continues whenever a fire is lit. When so treated they keep almost indefinitely.

(B) Narrow strips, each four to five feet in length, of flexible cedar-bark, are prepared by the women. The fisherman takes the ends of two of these, ties one around a fish's head, and the other around its tail. Another olachen is tied parallel to the first, and then others, until the two cords are supporting thirty to forty fish, each separated by about one inch. The middle of the strings is laid across a horizontal bar above a fire or in the open, and the process of drying continues as in the last method. The fish not infrequently catch fire if a large blaze is built up in a house, so careful people remove their olachen before a feast or other celebration.

Though dried olachen provide a useful article for winter diet, the fish are chiefly valued for their grease, *stuk*$^{\text{s}}$, whch is used as a condiment with all kinds of berries. It is sometimes extracted from the fresh fish, but the Bella Coola consider this to be tasteless and prefer to wait until the olachen have remained in the pits for ten days to two weeks. Warm weather hastens the process, but in any case nothing is done until the disgusting smell has penetrated for miles, proving that putrefaction is well advanced. In former times, all boiling was done with hot stones, but at present boxes with iron bottoms are used as kettles. These are of various shapes and sizes, an average being, perhaps, four feet long, three feet wide, and eighteen inches deep. These are set on fireplaces which vary according to the ingenuity of the refiner. Some are excavated in the river bank, lined with stones set in clay, and fitted at the inner end with an old stovepipe to provide draught for the miniature furnace. The box-kettle is placed on the ground over the excavation and the cook pours in water. Then his wife, children, and friends bring the putrid fish, which they ladle in until only a few inches of water are visible. A slow fire is built beneath, and, as the mixture begins to boil, the cook stirs it with a five-foot stick having a slightly flattened blade. Presently the grease begins to rise to the surface whence it is skimmed off and placed in recep-

2; McIlwraith E-5 (1922-1924) 1948
NE6 Bellacoola NE6

Saiuk: Thunder, anthropomorphized.
Saiyaas: *Kusiut* name of a Kimsquit man.
salalsi: Historical account; the term does not include ancestral myths or other personal property.
sa·lhalaamm: 1—Food distributed by the donor of a *kusiut* dance; the term is also applied to presents given instead of food.
2—Food stored up for this purpose, or even for a meal.
sa·lhsta: Cannibalistic incubus.
sa·lhsiamm: Presents given as "Food" by a bridegroom and his relatives to the bride's kinsmen when the latter come to his house on the wedding day.
salilshkdimut: Profession of *kusiut* executioner.
salukwalas: Object obtained by a shaman from a supernatural being and displayed by him.
saml: Sockeye salmon.
Sanaitpamukits Alquntam: One of the sons of the supreme god.
Sanunuxmmlaix: Supernatural being who has the prerogative of scratching in the land above.
Sanuthum or *Sanuthumdimut*: One of the names of Mount *Nuitsalut* as chief.
Sanxixmasas, "The Light Bringer": 1—One of Raven's names as chief.
2—Ancestral name of a *Stuie* man.
3—A celebrated Bella Coola hunter and chief.
sasx; *vocative*, *sasxi*; *vocative plural*, *sasxwa·ks*: Comrade, especially one engaged in an enterprise with the speaker.
sa·tla: Spoon-shaped river canoe.
Satlia: Village at point between North and South Bentinck Arms.
Satlyenuts: River flowing into the middle Bella Coola from the north.
Sa·lma: Death, anthropomorphized.
salodz: Whetstone, *archaic*.
Sa·tsk': 1—Kimsquit River.
2—Village near the mouth of the river.
Sa·tshamp: Inhabitants of the Kimsquit River valley.
satskwa·n: Raft.
Sa·tsmnaw·i: Shaman's name acquired from Death.
sawa: Pillow.
sawadjut, "Pillowness": *Kusiut* ceremonial at which no call is present.
sayi, *vocative*, *sayinas*: Brother or sister younger than speaker, especially the youngest of a family.
Sayinas: Proper name of a youngest brother mentioned in an ancient story.
sazham: Bracken.
sazwinas: Tide flats.
sekdjult: Heart.
Selualaxam: That part of *Sunq^w* which did not fall in the crash at the beginning of time.
Semhait: Village on Rivers Inlet.
Semsiutaw·i: Part of a peculiar repository.
semsumlkdimut, "Like Salmon": The so-called "Winter Salmon," probably steelhead salmon, obtained by Raven in the beginning of time.
se'mtsta, "Resting Place": Limit of the sun's course. The word for December is connected with this.
senkwulaam: Leader of musicians.